

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 MADRID 09370 131907Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EURE-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01
/084 W

----- 113359 /42

P R 131658Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8295
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO
USEC BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MADRID 9370

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SP
SUBJECT: PRE-REFERENDUM ATMOSPHERE: IMPRESSIONS OF VALENCIA

1. WITH CLOSE TO ONE AND A HALF MILLION ELIGIBLE VOTERS, VALENCIA PROVINCE IS THE THIRD LARGEST PROVINCIAL ELECTORAL DISTRICT IN SPAIN, COMING AFTER BARCELONA (FIRST) AND MADRID BUT AHEAD OF SEVILLA. TO A DEGREE, IT IS REPRESENTATIVE OF SOUTHERN SPAIN'S LEVANTE AREA (VALENCIA, ALICANTE, CASTELLON AND PART OF MURICA) WHICH TOTALS ABOUT TWO AND A HALF MILLION ELIGIBLE VOTERS OR ROUGHLY 10 PERCENT OF ALL SPANISH VOTERS. AN EMBOFF TOOK SOUNDINGS OF THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IN VALENCIA LESS THAN A WEEK BEFORE THE DECEMBER 15 REFERENDUM ON POLITICAL REFORM, SOUNDINGS THAT PRODUCED THE FOLLOWING IMPRESSION TIC SNAPSHOT OF CURRENT VALENCIA POLITICAL ATTITUDES.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 MADRID 09370 131907Z

2. INFORMED OBSERVERS DIFFERED WIDELY IN THEIR

PROJECTIONS OF VOTER PARTICIPATION (65 TO 85 PERCENT) BUT A PREPONDERANT NUMBER PREDICATED FROM 70 TO 80 PERCENT. THERE WAS A CONSENSUS THAT ABSTENTION WOULD RUN HIGHER IN THE URBAN THAN IN THE RURAL AREAS. AMONG THOSE WHO VOTED, THERE WOULD BE A STRONG MAJORITY OF "YES" VOTES, AND FEW BLANK VOTES. WHATEVER THE ABSTENTION RATE TURNED OUT TO BE THAT FIGURE WOULD CERTAINLY NOT BE ANY ACCURATE INDICATION OF OPPOSITION PARTY STRENGTH. ALTHOUGH THE GOVT CAMPAIGN FOR VOTER PARTICIPATION WAS RECEIVED TO BE MAKING SOME HEADWAY, THE REFERENDUM WAS NOT EVOKING THE DEGREE OF INTEREST ANTICIPATED FOR THENATIONAL ELECTIONS NEXT SPRING. PRO-ABSTENTION OPPOSITION PROPAGANDA WAS ONLY MODERATE. FINALLY, IN WAY OF GENERAL CONSENSUS, VALENCIA WAS A RICH REGION RELATIVELY FREE OF POLITICAL OR LABOR TENSIONS, AND THEREFORE NOT PRONE TO RADICALISM.

3. SOME CHARACTERIZATIONS WERE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST. VALENCIANS WERE TRANQUIL AND NON CONFLICTIVE BY NATURE, THEY WERE MORE INDEPENDENT MINDED THAN THEIR COMPATRIOTS IN SOME OTHER REGIONS AND COULD THEREFORE NOT BE DRAGGED EASILY INTO AGITATION, THEIR "SHOW ME" ATTITUDE WAS A NATURAL BRAKE AGAINST RADICALISM. THE "SILENT MAJORITY" WOULD THUS BE NON RADICAL AND THE RURAL VOTER WOULD BE MORE APT TO HEED GOVERNMENTAL ADVICE. HOWEVER, IT WAS TO BE RECOGNIZED THAT VALENCIANS TENDED TO BE LACKADAIDICAL AND THEY WOULDN'T VOTE IF THEY DIDN'T FEEL LIKE IT. WOMEN WOULD ABSTAIN MORE THAN MEN. AND IN MANY CASES WOULD PREVAIL UPON THE MENFOLK NOT TO GET INVOLVED IN "POLITICS" ALTHOUGH WORKER INTEREST IN THE REFERENDUM WAS SLIGHT- CURRENT COLLECTIVE BARGAINING BEING OF MORE OBVIOUS AND DIRECT CONCERN TO THEM. THE MAJORITY OF WORKERS (LOCATED IN SMALLER INDUSTRIES) WERE NOT SUBJECT TO THE TRADITIONAL OPPOSITION'S PRESSURE FOR ABSTENTION AND WOULD GO TO POLLS. AS A MATTER OF FACT THERE WAS LITTLE UNDERSTANDING OF THE RATIONALE OF ABSTENTION BEING PEDDLED BY THE OPPOSITION EVEN THOSE WHO WOULD BE VOTING, SAY, FOR THE SOCIALIST PSOE NEXT YEAR, COULD NOT COMPREHEND WHY THEY SHOULD SUPPORT POLITICAL REFORM WITH THEIR "YES" VOTES ON DECEMBER 15. VALENCIA IS NOT VERY POLITICIZED AS YET.

4. CERTAIN VIEWS WERE THOUGH PROVOKING AND AT TIME UNEXPECTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 MADRID 09370 131907Z

THUS, THE LEADING PROVINCIAL USO (CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST) LABOR LEADER CONFIDED TO THE LABATT THAT HE BELIEVED THE GOVT HAD "ACTED WISELY" IN THE WHOLE POLITICAL REFORM MATTER. ALTHOUGH NOT PERFECT, IT WAS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CATHOLIC HIERARCHY OBSERVED THAT MANY VOTERS STILL WONDERED WHETHER A "YES" VOTE ON DECEMBER 15 MEANT THAT "THE GOOD AND POSITIVE ASPECTS". OF THE FRANCO AREA (I.E. STABILITY, PEACE, INCREASING PROSPERITY, ETC.) WOULD

ALSO BE SCRAPPED. IN THAT CONNECTION SUAREZ DECEMBER 14 ADDRESS TO THE NATION COULD BE CRUCIAL. EXTREME RIGHTIST BLAS PINARS. RECENT TV STATEMENT (IF FRANCO WERE ALIVE HEHE WOULD HAVE VOTED NO TO THE POLITICAL REFORM) HAD MORE THAN MADE A CERTAIN IMPRESSION IN VALENCIA. IT WASNOT SO MUCH THAT ALL THAT MANY AGREED WITH HIS PHILOSOPHY BUT THEY RESPECTED HIS "HONESTY" AND WERE "CONFUSED" AS TO HOW TO REACT AT THE POLLS. A RECENT DECEMBER POLL OF VALENCIA DIOESESE PRIESTS (TERMED BY CHURCH OFFICIALS AS "A VALID CORSS SECTION OF THE VALENCIAN POPULATION") HAS SHOWN 80 PERCENT AS POLITICALLY CENTER MODERATE, WITH 20 PERCENT ON THE EXTREMEES (WITH THE ECTREME LEFT HAVING THE EDGE OVER THE EXTREME RIGHT.) FINALLY A NUMBER OF OBSERVERS MADE THE POINT THAT UNLIKE HIS COUNTERPART OF THE 1930'S TODAYS AVERAGE SPANIARD WITH HIS HOME, AUTOMBILE,AND TV HAS MUCH TO LOSE SHOULD HE INDULGE IN RADICAL POLITICAL ADVENTURISM.

5. THESE PRE-REFERENDUM IMPRESSION OF VALENCIA ARE BASED ON STEMETS MADE TO EMBOFF BY PROVINIAL GOVT, BUSINESS, CHURCH AND LABOR LEADERS. INCIDENTALLY, ALTHOUGH VALENCIAN" REGIONALISM" CANNOT BE COMPARED TO THAT OF CATALONIA WILL PUSH FOR A MORE FEDERALLY ORIENTED GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM.STABLER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION FORECASTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MADRID09370
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760459-0212
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761249/aaaabpws.tel
Line Count: 137
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 APR 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <06 APR 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRE-REFERENDUM ATMOSPHERE: IMPRESSIONS OF VALENCIA
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SP
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006